



Governor Terry E. Branstad
Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds
San Wong, Director

Iowa Department of Human Rights (DHR) Board

Minutes of Regular Meeting

Lucas State Office Building, Conference Room 201
321 E. 12th St.
Des Moines, IA 50319

March 3, 2016
1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Members Present: Floyd Winter, Chair; Karen Mackey (phone), Michelle Ray-Michalec (phone); Sal Alaniz, Elizabeth Coonan; Ben Jung; Jason Glass; Sherri Soich; Theresa Legg; Director San Wong (ex-officio).

Members Absent: Anna Brown; Representative Phyllis Thede (ex-officio); Senator Rita Hart (ex-officio).

Staff Present: Mary Bowser, Budget Analyst; Monica Stone, Division Administrator of Community Advocacy & Services; Bill Brand, Division Administrator of Community Action Agencies; Sonya Streit, Central Administration; Steve Michael, Division Administrator of Criminal & Juvenile Justice Planning.

Others Present: Jeff Reese and Peggy Chicoine, American Sign Language interpreters; Samantha Glass, visitor.

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Winter called the meeting to order. A quorum was present. Introductions were made. Chair Winter thanked everyone for preparing for and participating in the DHR events held on March 2 and 3.

2. Action Item: Approve November 10, 2015, Minutes

Glass and Mackey moved to approve the November 10, 2015, minutes, seconded by Ray-Michalec. Motion carried by voice vote.

3. Board Member Updates

a. Commission of Latino Affairs

Alaniz has been making visits in the community and answering questions from constituents regarding human rights issues and engagement. He brought the CARES group to Des Moines to participate in the Race Exhibit at the Science Center. The visit challenged that group and broadened their perspectives.

New commissioners have been appointed to the Commission of Latino Affairs. Alaniz's term expires at the end of April 2016.¹

b. Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning (CJJP)

Michael stated that the Public Safety Advisory Board (PSAB) met on March 3, 2016. There were two presentations. The first was on the Results First model, a national return on investment, cost-benefit analysis of the Pew-McArthur initiative. The Department of Corrections has used this model on their programs and services. The initiative originally focused on corrections. Now it will expand to other areas such as juvenile justice, substance abuse, mental health, child welfare, and early childhood. PSAB thinks that the Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning (CJJP) should be the agency to use the Results First initiative in those other policy areas. The project will need staff because it would be a full-time job for six months for each policy area, where each topic would be rotated every three or four years. CJJP has not been successful in getting additional appropriations. PSAB is trying to get decision-makers to acknowledge that this is an investment, not a cost.

The second presentation was made by State Public Defender Adam Gregg and First Assistant Public Defender Kurt Swaim. PSAB wanted to learn about the quality of representation that low-income offenders receive. The response was that state public defenders and their contracted lawyers have more criminal experience than any other lawyers in the state.

PSAB also discussed pending legislation.

- In November 2015, the Governor's Working Group on Justice Reform made a recommendation to make juvenile court records confidential. Subsequently, a bill was passed to make juvenile court records confidential. In the meantime, PSAB developed a report regarding the status of juvenile court records in other states and what the best policies are that have been proven to be effective.
- A bill passed by the Senate would require the Iowa Public Safety Advisory Board to conduct a study aimed at reducing community violence. It seeks research and

¹ Sal Alaniz was subsequently appointed to fill the term vacated by the resignation of Ramon Rodriguez.

recommendations relating to the cause and prevention of violence, including gun violence.

- Another bill would require CJP to establish a task force related to extending juvenile court jurisdiction in delinquency matters to include persons under the age of 21.

c. Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs

Jung announced that the Asian Heritage Festival (CelebrAsian) event will be held May 27-28, 2016. It is one of the largest festivals in the state of Iowa, attracting more than 50,000 attendees. With that many attendees, it is a great platform for the Commission to showcase their work. The Commission is attempting to parlay the festival's activities with civic engagement. It will use venues like the Asian Heritage Festival to reach out to many people and increase awareness about the Commission. There will be new Commission members at that time of the festival, so that would also be a good opportunity to engage those who are starting their new term.

The Commission had a panel discussion regarding civic engagement in November 2015 at Grand View University. There was a small number but good opportunity within the Asian and Pacific Islander (API) community to get people listening and thinking about the idea of being more involved, especially with caucuses were coming up.

APIAVote (Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote), a nonprofit organization, is driving efforts to get more APIs across the country to register to vote and participate in the process.

The Commission held a mock caucus for the API community February 1, 2016.

d. Commission on the Status of Women

Coonan announced the *Women You Know, Women You Want to Meet* gathering to connect with other women in the community. Phyllis Peters, Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women, will serve on the panel "Closing the Wage Gap. What Can We Do in Iowa?" on April 11, 2016, from 6:30-9:30 p.m. at Grand View University. Grace Protos from the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau is moderating. A federal investigator from the EEOC will also be part of the discussion and giving his perspective on the issue.

The Capitol Girls program was held in conjunction with the Girl Scouts. About fourteen young ladies in high school attended. They are looking for ways to expand the program. The program provides an opportunity to learn about the legislative process.

Nominations for the Iowa Women's Hall of Fame are being accepted from all over the state of Iowa. The Commission is also taking applications for the Cristine Wilson Medal

for Equality and Justice. The deadline is April 1, 2016. More information can be found on the Commission's website.

e. Commission on Deaf Services

Legg stated that the Commission's meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2016. An issue that will be discussed is the interpreting shortage in Iowa. The interpreting program at Iowa Western Community College closed. There is one community college left in Iowa (Scott Community College in Davenport) that has an interpreting program.

In the past, TTY telecommunications devices were used by deaf persons but the device has become obsolete. The Commission would like video phones to be set up in public libraries because constituents cannot afford high speed internet.

There will be a workshop called "Understanding the Law: The ADA Rights and Responsibilities." The Office of Deaf Services is collaborating with the Iowa state Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. The workshop will be held April 8-9 in Ames.

This is Legg's last term on the Commission.

f. Commission of Persons with Disabilities

Ray-Michalec stated that the Commission met this morning. The meeting focused on community advocacy and outreach. They discussed networking, developing a new brochure, fundraising, accessibility issues, employment, and education. Mason City is building a playground where they don't think it should be handicap accessible. One of the Commissioners tried to educate the city on ADA and the law. Another Commissioner is a realtor and offered to help them with financing if that's an issue. The Commission continues to address issues with disabled veterans. Jill Avery, Executive Officer in the CAS Division, has connected with the head of the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs, Bob Steben, and will invite him to a commission meeting to see how the Commission can incorporate the needs of disabled veterans. The Commission also discussed the website and how it can be used as the Commission continues to work in the community.

g. Commission of Native American Affairs

Mackey stated that an issue the Commission is currently working on is the health system, particularly related to Native Americans. There is an Indian healthcare hospital in Winnebago, Nebraska that was recertified and can no longer accept Medicare/Medicaid type money, which impacts native people in Sioux City. The highest concentration of Native Americans in the state of Iowa is in Sioux City.

The Commission is receiving education on archeological digs.

4. Department Report

Director Wong stated that the department is making progress terms of cohesiveness among the departments, commissions, board, and staff. As a department, it is finding a way to present itself so people can see the synergy of the work. Stone put together an infographic that displays where the department is targeting its attention, where improvements are needed, and what strategies are put in place for success. The infographic can also be used as a basis for digital presentations where it can show more detailed information.

5. DHR Division Updates

a. Community Advocacy and Services (CAS)

Stone introduced Sonia Reyes-Snyder, the new Executive Officer of the Office of Latino Affairs. Reyes-Snyder will be working across all of the offices to help engage young people.

One of the things in the Strategic Plan is looking at how the division can help other state agencies better serve constituents. CAS is in the midst of developing a program called “Diversity & Inclusion Circles” where staff will work as consultants to help other agencies identify ways to be more diverse and inclusive. CAS will start with DHR once the curriculum is put together, then will work with other agencies around the state.

Stone highlighted legislation regarding language access, civic engagement, and community connectedness.

b. Division of Community Action Agencies (DCAA)

There are some federal legislative issues related to LIHEAP, Weatherization, and Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). Although the federal budget year began October 1, Congress did not pass the federal budget until the middle of December. DCAA was awarded the first two quarters of funding, but won’t know what the final allocation for Iowa is for CSBG and LIHEAP.

The statutory provisions for CSBG and weatherization have expired, but annual appropriations continue to be approved to fund these programs so that they continue. There is a big push to get both programs reauthorized in Congress to keep the statutes in place. However, there is an issue with an initiative to redirect part of weatherization for other purposes. DCAA and its partners are helping with developing language in legislation to prevent funds from being taken away from Weatherization.

On the state legislative side, the governor has a recommendation for status quo funding for the Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) program. It appears that the Health and Human Services budget has no money to spare due to Medicaid issues.

c. Criminal and Juvenile Justice Planning (CJJP)

Michael highlighted Community and Strategic Planning (CASP) efforts, particularly at the local level. CJJP provided technical assistance and data to the communities to assist them with decision-making and plan implementation. There will be a Reengagement activity hosted by the National League of Cities in Dubuque with the focus on reentry of juveniles returning home from out-of-home placement. In June 2016, there will be a statewide Community Planning Event to address disproportionate minority contact.

6. Other

Chair Winter asked if DHR gets contacted by other human rights departments, and how we can provide assistance in the way of technical help. Director Wong stated the City of Des Moines just got a new director of human and civil rights department, Joshua Barr. Conversations have begun about ways to be more engaged with each other.

7. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

8. Next Meeting

Generally, the second quarter's meeting is typically in May but will try to schedule it when it gets closer.

9. Adjournment

Chair Winter asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made by Coonan and seconded by Jung. The motion carried by voice vote.